

THE BELCHAMP RURAL DISTRICT,

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF ESSEX.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH for 1908.

(Pursuant to the Regulations of the Local Government Board.)

Population (1881) 6200 ; (1891) 5722 ; (1901) 4847. *Number of parishes*, 17.

Acreage, 26548. *Persons per acre*, 0.18.

Number of Inhabited Houses, 1213. *Average number of persons per house*, 4.0.

Geological formation, chalk, covered on the higher ground with boulder clay, and in the valleys with drift sand and gravel or brick earth.

The following vital statistics are compiled from the returns made by the Registrars in the District :—

I. BIRTHS. There were **90** births registered during the year, equivalent to a birth-rate of **18.6** per 1000 of the population. The births and birth-rates in this District during the previous seven years were :—

	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Births	90	86	95	85	89	88	80	90
Birth-rate . . .	18.6	17.7	19.6	17.5	18.3	18.1	16.5	18.6

The Birth-rate for 1908 in Rural England and Wales was 26.2.

II. DEATHS. The number of deaths from all causes registered in the District was **56**, to which 12 deaths belonging to the District occurring in the Workhouse, and St. Leonard's Hospital, Sudbury, have to be added, making the total deaths **68**, equivalent to a death-rate of **14.0** per 1000 of the population. The deaths and death-rates during the previous seven years were :—

	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Deaths registered	76	63	66	69	61	52	61	56
Deaths belonging to the District	79	69	70	77	68	58	64	68
Death-rate	16.2	14.2	14.4	15.8	14.0	11.9	13.2	14.0

The Death-rate for 1908 in Rural England and Wales was 14.7.

The following table shows the relative age mortality :—

Deaths—Under 1 year.	1 to 5 years.	5 to 15 years.	15 to 25 years.	25 to 65 years.	over 65 years.
7	0	3	0	15	43

Among the 43 deaths over 65 years, were 20 over the age of 80 years.

III. *Infantile Mortality*. There were 7 deaths of infants under one year of age, equivalent to a death-rate of 77.7 per 1000 of births registered. One was a premature birth, and one died from scarlet fever while in the Sudbury Workhouse with its mother, where at the time a few cases of this disease had appeared.

The infantile deaths and death-rates for the previous seven years were as follows :—

	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Deaths of infants under one year . . .	11	5	11	13	8	3	5	7
Rate per 1000 of births registered . . .	122.2	61.3	115.7	152.9	89.8	34.1	62.5	77.7

The Infant Mortality for 1908 in Rural England and Wales was 110.

Deaths from Zymotic Diseases. The only deaths were two from scarlet fever, one of which, though belonging to the district, occurred outside it.

Deaths from Tuberculosis. Only one death occurred from this disease during the year, and was from phthisis. The Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1908, now come into operation, and directs that all cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, occurring under the Poor Law, are to be notified to and kept under the inspection of the Medical Officer of Health. It is to be hoped that some provision will be made for the isolation of advanced cases of this disease, they being the chief source of danger to other persons. Disinfection and cleansing of houses after a death from phthisis has been partially attended to, but in future will be always done; this Council having arranged with the Registrar of the district to send me notice at once, when any death from pulmonary tuberculosis is registered.

Deaths from other causes. These include—from cancer 4, bronchitis and pneumonia 6, heart diseases 2, and suicides 2.

Infectious Diseases Notification. There were 17 notifications received during the year, viz., scarlet fever 13, diphtheria 3, erysipelas 1. The record for the previous seven years was as follows :—

	Smallpox.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria and Croup.	Typhoid Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.	Total cases.	Per thousand population.
1901	0	1	20	0	0	5	26	5.3
1902	0	4	4	1	0	3 ch. pox 9	21	4.3
1903	0	1	0	0	0	5	6	1.2
1904	0	11	1 croup	1	1	3	17	3.5
1905	0	57	0	1	0	3	61	12.5
1906	0	17	0	0	0	0	17	3.5
1907	0	5	0	0	0	1	6	1.2
1908	0	13	3	0	0	1	17	3.5

The following are particulars of the occurrence of Zymotic diseases during the year:—

Scarlet Fever. The 13 cases which were notified were divided between the most extreme borders of the district, 6 being in one family in Bures Hamlet, and 7 in five families in Belchamp St. Pauls. In the latter, infection was taken from cases outside the district. The type of the disease was mild, all recovered, except one child who had complications. Disinfectants and instructions were supplied, and in due course the houses, clothes, &c., were disinfected.

Diphtheria. Three cases occurred at Belchamp St. Pauls in one family, and were children attending school, at the same time and as several other children were complaining of sore throats, I advised the closing of the school, and to have the class rooms cleansed and disinfected; this was done. The school was closed for ten days, and re-opened with a good attendance, and no further sore throats.

Measles. An outbreak of this disease occurred in the parish of Bulmer, during the spring, 22 children attending the village school took ill, and as others seemed likely to be affected, I advised closing the school for two weeks and watching the result. As no more children took ill the school was then re-opened.

SCHOOLS. There are 14 Elementary Schools in the District. With regard to the sanitary condition of the offices and conveniences all have undergone inspection and were generally found to be kept satisfactorily. In nine of the Schools there is no water supply on the premises; water is brought in a pail from the nearest supply and a dipping cup used. Though not strictly a hygienic arrangement, no illnesses have been communicated in this way, to my knowledge.

The action taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in schools is, on receiving notification of such, to exclude all children from infected houses until disinfected. In cases of scarlet fever being notified, to visit the school and examine all children who, if present, have been lately absent, sometimes it is necessary to examine every child in the school, for any trace of desquamation. With respect to measles, as this disease is generally among infants, the elder children who have already had measles are not excluded from school. Closure is only advised when the infectious disease has become very prevalent among the children.

WATER SUPPLY. The rainfall as registered in Sudbury was 19.32 inches, nearly 4 inches below the average, still the wells and many of the ponds in the district maintained their normal supply. There were five new private wells sunk, three of which were for new houses, and as the water was found to be pure, certificates were granted. Sixteen samples of water were taken for analysis, of these two were found to be so impure, that the wells were closed, and new wells sunk. Six contained excess of organic matter, requiring cleaning out and exclusion of surface drainage, which rendered them fit for use.

HOUSES. Two new houses were erected, these were on the site of four old cottages which were demolished. One case of overcrowding was abated. The house accommodation for the working classes is generally good, though in many parishes there are some exceptions; as a rule all have sufficient open space and garden or allotment ground. There are no new building bye-laws in force, though the model ones have been under consideration. No action is required to be taken under the Housing of the Working Classes Act.

SEWERS AND DRAINS. The privy cesspool, or pails, is the general system of dealing with excremental sewage, and to dispose of it on garden or allotment ground. The sewers and drains are only used in the district for house slops and storm water. No new sewers were laid down this year, a defective one in Foxearth was repaired. House drains made good or relaid numbered 26. Four ditches connected with sewers were cleaned out. The chemical precipitation process, which was installed last year at the Foxearth Brewery, to treat the trade effluent, has worked satisfactorily, and has almost entirely remedied the nuisance in the sewage ditch, into which this effluent is discharged.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS. There are seven factories in the district, viz., 4 flour mills, 2 breweries, and 1 builder's workshop. The workshops are 38 in number; this includes 15 bakehouses. All have undergone inspection, and have sufficient sanitary conveniences. Defects found, were slight and were remedied. No complaints were received from H.M. Inspector of Factories.

There are 6 slaughter-houses in the district and 2 offensive trades—a knacker's yard and a gut-casing workshop. All these have been inspected.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS. There are three of these in the district, which are registered in accordance with the 1885 Order, and are regularly inspected; all the cows are grass grazed. As the dairies and cowsheds fulfil the requirements as prescribed in the Model Regulations, 1905, this Council did not consider it to be necessary to adopt the same at present. One of the cowkeepers sends all his milk to London, having first passed it through a refrigerator and strainer.

GENERAL SANITATION. A destruction of fish in the river Stour occurred during the month of February, and at first was attributed to effluents from a chemical workshop in parish of Lyston. After close investigation I found that these effluents were quite harmless, and that the injury was due to the escape of coal tar washings from the Melford Gasworks, and that prevailing winds had concentrated the floating tar in bends of the river, so destroying the fish. Special filter tanks have now been made at the gasworks to prevent this escape of tar products in future.

Systematic inspections have been made in each parish during the year, as well as constant special inspections.

Two District and Maternity Nurses continue to render valuable hygienic aid in three of the largest parishes.

No legal proceedings were necessary this year.

Annexed is a tabular statement, relative to the sanitary work done in the 17 parishes in the District.

Tabular statements, according to the forms supplied by the Local Government Board, of sickness and mortality within the districts, are appended to the official reports.

J. SINCLAIR HOLDEN, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1908.

		Alphamstone.	Belchampt Otten.	Belchampt St. Pauls.	Belchampt Walter.	Borley.	Bulmer.	Bures Hamlet.	Foxearth.	Gestingthorpe.	Great Henny.	Little Henny.	Lamarsh.	Liston.	Middleton.	Pentlow.	Twinstead.	Wickham St. Pauls	TOTAL.
General Sanitation.	Complaints received	1	2	1	1	...	1	1	2	2	...	1	...	2	2	...	1	15	
	Nuisances detected	6	6	7	6	2	7	6	6	7	5	...	2	3	2	4	1	74	
	Nuisances abated without notice	5	3	4	4	2	5	5	5	3	2	...	1	3	2	2	1	50	
	Nuisances abated after notice	1	2	1	2	...	2	2	1	4	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	18
	Notices served	1	2	1	2	...	2	2	1	4	1	...	...	...	2	...	1	19
	Premises inspected	16	12	33	16	7	46	26	25	20	10	4	15	6	11	19	12	293	
	Houses disinfected	...	...	6	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
	Houses closed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2	4
	Houses demolished	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2	4
	Houses newly erected or re-built	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	2
	Houses connected with sewers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	4
	Overcrowding abated	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	Water supply certificates granted	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	1	4
	Water supply certificates deferred	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	Water samples taken for analysis	1	3	...	1	1	2	1	3	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	2	16
	Wells sunk	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	5
	Wells cleansed and repaired	1	...	1	...	...	...	2	2	3	1	...	1	1	1	...	2	15
	Wells closed	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
	Privies, new	1	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	2	1	...	...	1	11
	Privies improved	2	2	4	1	2	5	4	3	4	3	...	2	...	1	...	1	34	
Drains, new and improved	1	2	...	1	...	...	4	5	4	2	...	1	3	...	...	3	26	
Sewers repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Ditches cleansed	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	
Animals improperly kept	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	
Factories inspected	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	7
Factory & Workshop Act, 1901.	Workshops inspected (including 15 bakehouses)	2	1	2	3	1	6	5	2	5	3	...	2	3	...	1	2	38	
	Offensive trades	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
	Slaughter-houses inspected	1	...	1	2	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
	Offensive accumulations	...	1	2	2	...	1	3	2	2	...	...	1	...	2	...	1	17
Dairies and cow sheds inspected	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	3	

SIDNEY ALLPRESS,

Inspector of Nuisances.

